

Im Not Sure I Can Trust God

by Richard E. Bieber

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God through faith, even when faced with difficult decisions and challenges in life.

Scripture: Matthew 17:20, Luke 17:5, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:6, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Spiritual Integrity"

Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches about Harry, a man of faith who faced a moral dilemma at work and chose to compromise his integrity for personal gain, leading to a crisis of faith. The sermon emphasizes the struggle between what we claim to believe and how we actually live our lives, often revealing a lack of trust in God. Jesus demands faith from his disciples, as it is the only connection we have with God, and without it, we cannot please Him. The sermon highlights the importance of confessing our lack of faith, seeking Jesus' help to increase our faith, and taking daily steps of obedience as acts of faith.

Transcript

If ever there was a man of faith it was Harry. Everybody in church looked up to Harry. He always had a good word to share. Always upbeat. Harry was the perfect example of what it means to live by faith in the real world.

So what went wrong?

After years of joyful service, suddenly Harry is walking around under a cloud. His smiles are gone. He's withdrawn. Keeps to himself. Is he depressed? Why should he be? His family is okay. His kids are doing well at school. But Harry is just not the same man.

So what happened? Everybody's guessing, but nobody really knows. Because Harry is not in a mood to talk about it.

Here's what happened:

One day at work the boss came up to him. "Harry, we got a problem. If we file these tax forms the way you filled them out this company is going to take a big hit."

"But Boss, these are the facts. My figures are accurate."

"Harry....you're not getting my message. I need you to be a little 'creative' here."

"But Boss, you're asking me to do something that's not right."

"Harry, you have a good salary, a comfortable life-style. Think about it."

So Harry weighed his options. He always considered himself to be a man of faith.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

"But can I really afford to take a stand here...and lose my job? Maybe I should quit. But where am I going to find a job that pays like this one in this economy?....I know what I should do. But can I really trust God to get me through this?Sometimes you just have to be practical."

So Harry got practical.

The Boss was delighted with Harry's 'creativity.' Gave him a raise. But down in Harry's soul, the lights went out.

Now you and I know that Harry has a lot of company. He's not alone out there in that twilight zone of faith. In fact, when push comes to shove, we too discover that there is often a wide gap between what we believe with our mouthsand what we really believe.

We say we believe the Apostles Creed. We claim to believe every word that Jesus speaks. But the life we live every day....the way we spend our time. The way we get along with folks---especially the ones who don't like us. The way we handle money. The way we handle the truth....All these things reveal that much of the time we are actually living by a different creed.

We don't repeat this creed every Sunday. Maybe it never crosses our lips. But this creed is the real driver of the way we live. It consists of seven words:

I'm not sure I can trust God.

That's where most of us are living most of the time. It's not that we don't want to trust God. We do. We want to trust God. But we're not sure we can. We're not sure it's safe. We're not ready to put all our eggs in this basket.

Sometimes you just have to be practical.....

Jesus knew that his disciples were flawed men. Lots of imperfections in their lives. Weaknesses. Vanities. This did not seem to bother Jesus. Their sins and their flaws were his problem, which he had come to solve at an awesome price on the cross. Jesus had come to redeem them from their sins.

But there was one thing Jesus did require of them: Faith...Trust.

"Where is your faith?"

"Why are you fearful, O men of little faith?"

"Have faith in God!"

Jesus demanded faith. He never excused the lack of it.

Because faith is the only connection we have with God. There is no other. What's the point of praying if you have no faith? What's the point of asking for the gift of the Holy Spirit, if you don't have enough faith to expect an answer?

Now faith is being sure of things hoped for, certain of things not seen. For by it the men of old received divine approval.....And without faith it is impossible to please God. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 11

As far as Jesus is concerned, our lack of faith is not a weakness. It is sin. It's the only sin left. Every other sin is nailed to the cross. All your sins. All my sins. All the evil. All the crud. All the shame...dragged down into our Lord's death. Atoned for before the eye of a Holy God, at a cost we could never pay.

But when Jesus comes to us and says, "Your sins are forgiven. Put your life into my hands and I will take you through every storm, every flood, every fire, even death itself.....and we respond with a life that says, "I'm not sure I can trust you".....what more can he do?

By hesitating at his invitation....by fearing to put our lives into his hands and walk with him all the way, we're shutting the door to the life of heaven. We're making it impossible for his redemptive power to live in us. Jesus is knocking on the door; but it remains shut until we open it by faith.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me.....I will come in and eat with her and she with me."

Jesus spoke those words, not to unbelievers, but to believers. These were his words to the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3. Folks who came to church all the time. They knew the doctrines. They were lovely people.....but Jesus was still standing outside, waiting for them to open the door.

And now as you read these words, Jesus, Crucified and Risen, is waiting outside your door. He's standing outside with all the power of heaven----to change you, to heal you, to bring you from darkness to light...to strengthen you with the strength of God. He's looking for one thing from you: faith.

And here's the good news: as you read these words Jesus is present with you to help you to have faith----if you will but cooperate. To cooperate with the Lord Jesus, so that he can impart a fresh measure of faith, there are three things you need to do:

First: Confess your lack of faith. What's the point of pretending? What's the point of going through the motions, when that weird creed---"I'm not sure I can trust God"---is gnawing at the depths of your soul like a pack of rats?

Admit it. Confess it. "Lord this is me! The real me!"

Second: Ask the Lord Jesus for help. That's what the disciples did....

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this sycamine tree, 'Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

Luke 17

"Lord, increase our faith!"

"Increase your faith? Increase it? Why if you had this much faith (like a tiny seed) you could move mountains!"

But Jesus doesn't let these men hang there without an answer. He shows them the way:...."You will have faith. And that faith will increase, if you will come down off your vanity pedestals and become simple servants. Just start serving God by the light you have."

So Jesus' very next words to the disciples are these:

"Will any of you, who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down at table?' Will he not rather say to him 'Prepare supper for me, and gird yourself and serve me, till I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink?' Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"

Luke 17

....That was Jesus' answer when they asked him to increase their faith. "Be a servant! Serve God by the light you have." And Jesus did not just give them empty words. He gave them power to be servants. The day came when the Risen Lord poured out his Spirit on them.

And these simple, ordinary people shook the world by faith---as servants of God!

They healed the sick. They spoke with power. And the Lord was with them all the way.

Third: Take one step into the light. As we take that one step into the light, a fresh flame of faith will ignite our hearts. One step into the light.

Harry was given a chance to take that step of faith. His job is on the line. Who is he going to trust: Is he going to trust God? Or is he going to trust his sleazy Boss?

And the reason Harry messed up on the big issue is because he was already messing up on the little, day-by-day steps of faith. Getting things right with his wife. Taking time to listen to his child. Repenting of his attitude toward his "deadbeat" neighbor next door.

Behind his pious mask, Harry was messing up on the little things. So when the big one came along he blew it.

Decisions, big ones and little ones, confront us every day---about doing the Father's will.

A wrong I must make right.

A need I have to take care of.

A phone call I should make.

Somebody I need to forgive. I've carried the grudge far too long.

Somebody I need to approach and ask for forgiveness.

God will shine light on that one step. And that step is the doorway to faith for today.

Faith is not a feeling. It's a doing.

Day in and day out, taking that one step--big or little---that we already know to be God's will. Faith is doing the little stuff which God sends our way with thanksgiving and praise. Then when the big stuff comes along, we'll have all the faith we need to do what needs to be done.

So let's start afresh....

By confessing our lack of faith.

By crying out to the Lord Jesus to help us to have faith.

By taking that one step which God will make clear to each of us.

Some simple act.

Some change of attitude.

(You won't get a telegram from Heaven. You'll just know.)

Faith is being sure of things hoped for, certain of things not seen.

Faith is being sure that we can trust God to keep us, no matter what happens, as we walk in the light he gives us----

---one step at a time

---one day at a time.

"Lord, increase our faith!"

He will. He will.

Beginning now, as we offer ourselves afresh to him.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-e-bieber/im-not-sure-i-can-trust-god/>

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